

Reflections

Strictly Come Voting

ACCORDING to a recent research paper from the House of Commons, the general election voting turnout has fallen from 83.9% in 1950 to 66.1% in 2015.

It is obvious that a third of registered voters did not bother to vote in the last election despite the availability of convenient modes of voting, including by post or proxy for those who can't make it to the polling stations.

Voting gives us the opportunity for our voice to be heard. It gives us the important right, some may say obligation, to choose leaders who have the capacity to translate their manifesto plans into reality. So, everyone who is registered should seriously consider voting. Otherwise we will end up with the situation that Plato described: 'One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors.'

At this crucial moment with imminent Brexit negotiations, straining NHS and divisive immigration, we need leaders who have a clear vision, and the capacity to translate that vision into action for the good of us all.

We are inundated



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with debates and arguments through the media these days, yet sometimes people say that they don't pay attention to politics. Everything that is happening around us is either directly or indirectly related to politics. The outstanding reason among those not voting is said to be lack of political knowledge and electoral engagement.

I was glad to note that hustings were held in Okehampton and in neighbouring towns and hamlets. I was particularly interested to see that some of the meetings were held in churches, where talks on politics used to be discouraged. There is no harm in discussing political ideas and electoral engagement in the churches or other places of worship, as long as it is done with mutual respect and openness without bias and prejudice.

'Those who believe religion and politics are not connected don't understand either' — Mahatma Gandhi.

For our brighter tomorrow, better vote today.